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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [SF](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: NO NEW FUNDING FOR SOUTH AFRICA/CONGO BINATIONAL
COMMISSION

Classified By: Political Counselor Raymond Brown. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) Amid concerns that South Africa has not lived up to its promises to fund projects agreed to during past binational commissions, President Mbeki on 2-3 April hosted Congolese President Kabila in Pretoria for the 5th South Africa-DRC Bi-National Commission. Press reports note that the two countries were to examine the status of cooperation in political and diplomatic areas; defense and security cooperation; economy, finance and infrastructure cooperation; social and humanitarian affairs; and last, how current projects support the priorities of the DRC and the identification of future projects.

¶2. (U) Press reports note that President Mbeki opened the meeting by admitting that bilateral agreements between South Africa and the DRC were being hampered by "challenges with regard to implementation." President Kabila also hinted that the DRC is not satisfied, saying that this meeting would be aimed at achieving "results-oriented" programmes to implement agreements. During the previous binational meeting in August 2007, deals were signed that included rehabilitation of Congo's airports, ports, and the Inga Dam and construction of new railway lines. The health ministers also agreed to collaborate in immunization programs and exchange of expertise.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, SAG Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, admitted to PolCouns and PolOff on 8 April that implementation of the 2007 commitments has not gone as smoothly or as fast as SAG had hoped, identifying lack of funding and the two countries' inability to agree on special projects as the two main challenges. Nevertheless, he said the SAG remains committed to DRC's reconstruction, pointing out that the DRC will be the only country the SAG meets with on a bilateral basis twice a year. Despite the more frequent contact, however, he acknowledged that the SAG did not commit any new funding during this binational commission, instead describing funding of agreed-to projects as "ongoing." The SAG also hopes to attract trilateral funding (i.e., third party) for "special development initiatives," which they define as projects benefitting multiple countries such as the Maputo corridor, according to Mamabolo.

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